

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT

Date Written	20 th March 2024
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Service Area	Learning
Committee Date	22 nd April 2024

Transition Arrangements Across all Key Stages

1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The report outlines how the main transition points a learner faces through their education are managed across the County Borough
- 1.2 These points are:
- From Early Years into Maintained Schools
 - From Primary School into Secondary School
 - From Secondary School into Further Education / Post -16 (if they are not going into Employment)
- 1.3 Reference is made to the ongoing research being undertaken by Cardiff Metropolitan University and how this can feed into improved transition that includes wider partners.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 Members discuss and debate the content of the report and identify if there are further aspects of this agenda that need scrutinising.

3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 3.1 During the course of their education children and young people will experience specific transition points, the main ones are:
- From Early Years into Maintained Schools
 - From Primary School into Secondary School
 - From Secondary School into Further Education/Post-16 (if they are not going into Employment)

- 3.2 Successful transition ensures continuity of learning which is crucial for progress. When transition is well-managed there is clear collaboration between provisions to share information and insights about each learner ensuring that their individual needs, strengths, and interests are understood and catered to.
- 3.3 This ensures learners can build upon prior knowledge and experiences, preventing any gaps or stagnation in learning.
- 3.4 There have been legal requirements for transition from primary to secondary school since 2006. In 2022 new transition Regulations were brought in by Welsh Government
- 3.5 Under these regulations governing bodies of maintained secondary schools and partner primary schools must jointly draw up a single transition plan to support transition of learners from Year 6 to Year 7. Provision for individual primary schools within the plan can be different, but there must only be a single plan held by the secondary school.
- 3.6 There is no legal requirement for plans from early years settings or into Post-16.

4.0 WHERE WE WERE

- 4.1 There have been legal requirements for transition plans to be developed from primary to secondary schools since 2006. In 2022 new transition Regulations were brought in by Welsh Government.
- 4.2 Under these regulations governing bodies of maintained secondary schools and partner primary schools must jointly draw up a single transition plan to support transition of learners from Year 6 to Year 7. Provision for individual primary schools within the plan can be different, but there must only be a single plan held by the secondary school.
- 4.3 Despite there being no legal requirement there have been several iterations of transition plans within the Early Years to Maintained Schools arena.
- 4.4 In 2022 the local authority (LA) published guidance for Early Years settings and schools – attached at Appendix 1

5.0 WHERE WE ARE NOW

- 5.1 As part of a regional approach the LA was the lead authority in a funded piece of work aimed to develop a consistent multi-agency approach to transition from Early Years into Maintained Schools.
- As part of this work a series of training programmes have taken place with schools and wider partners with resources developed to support everyone in this important area of work.

- Unfortunately, the funding for this work has been stopped but several of our schools are still involved in network meetings to consider how this can be embedded further into everyday practice.
- 5.2 Across our secondary schools, each has a bespoke transition plan that aims to support a smooth transition for learners. These vary in approach but include:
- Opportunities for learners from Years 5 and 6 to visit their secondary school for a variety of purposes ranging from formal orientation to informal activities such as discos and music events.
 - A shared assessment portfolio across all schools using the same published programmes.
 - A cluster school council to support transition.
 - Developing the Governor Improvement Group to support a shared understanding of priorities.
 - Opportunities for staff to undertake learning walks focused on pupil progression across schools.
 - Sharing of good practice sessions in cluster schools
- 5.3 The Community Focused Schools team, have developed specific programme in one cluster engaging with identified learners and their families to support an easier transition in secondary school with the aim of improving attendance. This has included support during the summer holiday period.
- 5.4 The College, Merthyr Tydfil are proactive in working with all secondary schools to promote the courses on offer for Post-16 Activities include:
- Y11 transition evenings for pupils and their parents.
 - Monthly visits to the schools including support provision.
 - Taster sessions for Year 10 pupils who are provided with transport to the college.
 - Posters sent each month to publicise the courses available.
- 5.5 Careers Wales and I2A have a strong presence in all four schools and Tydfil Training is involved at 2 of the 4 schools.
- 5.6 The schools invite a range of organisations to hold mock interviews with pupils and advise them on work experience or strengthening their CVs.
- 5.7 A well-developed network group including deputy headteachers from all secondary schools, staff from The College and staff from the youth service meet regularly to discuss curriculum issues and transition activities.
- We are increasingly using The College to hold events e.g. the Business and Education Partnership officer has held a series of Careers fairs at the College for learners from specific clusters.
 - These have included learners from both the primary and secondary sector and aims to promote The College as our sixth form of choice.

5.8 Cardiff Metropolitan University are currently undertaking a series of 'deep dives' in the transition learner points outlined in 3.1 specifically looking at the role of wider agencies linking to the community focused schools' approach to ensure successful learner transition and progression.

5.9 There are several interim findings articulated below:

Early Year to Maintained Schools

- The 2022 Early Years Transition document sets out clear expectation for Early Years Transition including the role of partners.
- This is at an early stage of development and there is variable practice across the local authority.
- Not all schools currently participate in the termly Early Years forum which provides an opportunity for a range of partners to meet, share practice and consider the transitions needs of individual pupils.

Primary Schools to Secondary Schools

- Schools do not always use the Welsh Government Transition Guidance opting for a more tailored context specific approach as outlined in 5.2 above.
- Public Health are a key partner supporting the wider transition, but it is often difficult to get their engagement at this stage.
- Parental engagement is not always sought but there are good opportunities for parents to visit school sites and meet senior staff during planned engagement events.
- Better use of community-based facilities could be utilised as transport is a barrier for some when attending activities on school sites.

Secondary Schools to Further Education/Post-16

- There is limited multi-agency involvement.

6.0 WHERE WE WANT TO BE

6.1 All primary schools participating in the termly Early years forum.

6.2 A wider range of partners engaging in transition activities to not only support the learner more effectively but also to provide the next stage of education with as much information regarding the learner as possible in a timely manner.

6.3 **All** secondary schools plan a wide range of activities, academic and otherwise engaging with their partner primary schools from at least year 5 onwards.

6.4 Community groups support transition activities.

7.0 WHAT WE NEED TO DO NEXT

7.1 Share the findings from the Cardiff Metropolitan Research paper with all partners as soon as it is completed.

- 7.2 Develop a good practice guide for primary to secondary transition utilising the work already prevalent in our schools.
- 7.3 Continue to develop the partnerships with The College through curriculum activities and utilising The College space for events.
- 7.4 Work with Public Health to see how information can be shared safely and appropriately.
- 7.5 Work with community groups to support activities that aid a smoother transition.

8.0 CONTRIBUTION TO RAISING ASPIRATIONS RAISING STANDARDS (RARS) STRATEGY

- 8.1 The contents of this report relate to the following themes and goals within the RARS:
- THEMES: Partnership & Collaboration; Pandemic Recovery
 - GOALS: Improving Achievement & Progression

9.0 CONTRIBUTION TO WELLBEING OBJECTIVES

- 9.1 Identify the Wellbeing Objectives and respective plans and strategies to which the contents of the report relate. Explain how the issues in the report contribute to the Wellbeing Objectives.
- An Aspiration Merthyr Tydfil, focused on learning

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BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Title of Document(s)	Document(s) Date	Document Location
Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?		No